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Spring 2-1-2005

PSC 120.01: Introduction to Comparative Government and Politics

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PSc 120 (3cr) *Introduction to Comparative Government & Politics* Spring 2005
Peter Koehn Office: LA 416 x5294 M 2-4; W 12-12:30, 2-3:30; and by appointment
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Course Description

Introduction to the cross-national and comparative study of contemporary political systems. Focus on structural/behavioral similarities and differences, common and diverse aspirations/struggles, globalization and local responses, and domestic-foreign linkages. Reference to major illustrative countries in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should understand patterns of governance and political diversity/complexity around the world, be able to explain similarities and differences among key political institutions and the role of political culture, be familiar with different theoretical and analytical approaches to the comparative study of political systems, and be capable of interpreting current events based on sound conceptual understanding and empirical grounding. This course also is intended to provide the basic grounding for advanced study of comparative politics at the upper-division level and the basis for life-long learning about other political systems and human concerns.

Required Texts

Monte Palmer, *Comparative Politics: Political Economy, Political Culture, and Political Independence*. [P] Second edition. 2001

Christian Soe (ed.). *Comparative Politics 04/05*. [CP] Guilford: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill, 2005.

All other readings are on e-res. Password: psc120

Course Requirements

Students are expected to complete readings on schedule, to attend class regularly, and to participate in class discussions and debates. Assessment will be based on the following:

Class participation (including debates) = 10%

Journal (due dates **18 March & 29 April**) = 15%

First examination (**23 Feb.**) = 25%

Second examination (**11 March**) = 25%

Third examination (**11 April**) = 25%

Final examination (**11 May**) = 25%

(the highest 3 of the 4 exam grades will be counted in determining final grades for the course)

Late journals will be penalized by one – in grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each scheduled class that passes without submission. Reported final grades will reflect pluses and minuses. For credit/no-credit grading, students must attain an overall grade of D- to receive a “CR.”

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

Part I: Overview

- 24, 26 Jan A. Comparing political systems
 *P, pp. 3-12, 35-36
 *Lustig and Koester, "What Do You Call Someone from the United States of America?" (1996)
- 28 Jan B. Types of political systems and political actors
 *P., pp. 13-27
- 31 Jan C. Political economy; development and underdevelopment
 *P, pp. 27-32, 44-45
- 2 Feb D. The global/local vortex
 *P, pp. 36-39
 *CP, #43, 30

Part II: Western Europe

- 4, 7 Feb A. Britain
 *P, pp. 51-52, 57-89
 *CP, pp. 3-7, #1, 2, 3, 4
- 9, 11 Feb B. France
 *P, pp. 93-94, 101-132
 *CP, pp. 8-10, #5, 6, 7
- 14, 16 Feb C. Germany
 *P, pp. 137-138, 144-174
 *CP, pp. 8-11, #8, 9, 10
- 18 Feb Debates 1, 2
 *CP, #22
- 23 Feb First examination**
- 25 Feb D. EU and the New Europe
 *P, pp. 39-44
 *CP, #23, 25
- 28 Feb Debate 3

Part III: Russia and Central Asia

- 28 Feb., A. Russia
 2 March *P, pp. 223-224, 231-264
 *CP, #27, 28, 29
- 4 March B. Post-Soviet States

Part IV: The "South"

- 4 March A. Colonial legacy; inequalities
 *Payne and Nassar, "Global & Domestic Inequalities" (2003)
- 7 March *Life and Debt* video VT05840 (48 min)
- 9 March B. Ethnic conflicts
 * Payne and Nassar, "Ethnicity, Ethnic Conflict, and Conflict Resolution" ('03)
- 9 March Debate 4
- 11 March Second examination**
- 14 March Debates 5, 6
- 16 March C. Military rule
- 16 March D. Semi-authoritarian states
 *Ottaway, "Facing the Challenge of Semi-authoritarian States" (2003)
- 18,28 March E. Islam & Politics
 Islamic Wave video (VT11289) 50 minutes
 *CP, #38
 *Nye, "Easy Does It: Soft Power is Vital in Fighting Terrorism" (2004)
- 28, 30 March F. Iran
 *CP, #37
 Mrs President video (VT11800) first 15-20 minutes
- 1,4,6 April G. Democratic (and externally imposed) transitions
 An Irresistible Vision: Mandella film (DVD00825)
 *CP, #39, 32, 40
- 6 April Debate 7
- 8 April Debates 8, 9
 *CP, #21
- 11 April Third examination**

Part V: China

- 13 April *CCP: The New Leap Forward* (video)
- 15,18,20 Ap A. China's political system
 *P, pp. 269-307
 *CP, #33, 34, 35
 *Kahn, "Hu Takes Full Power" (2004)

- 22 April B. Democracy in China?
 *R. Scalapino, "Will China Democratize?"
 Democracy in China: A Billion Small Voices video (30 minutes)
- You decide: The size and educational level of its population preclude the possibility of democracy in the China mainland in the foreseeable future.*
- 25 April C. Hong Kong
 *Magnier, "China Warns Hong Kong on Democracy Referendum" (2004)
 Hong Kong Five Years Later (video)

Part VI: Mexico & Nigeria

- 27 April A. Mexico
 *P, pp. 359-361, 368-399
 *CP, # 31
- 29 April B. Nigeria
 *P, pp. 441-474

2 May Debate 10

Part VII: Big questions of contemporary comparative politics

- 2 May A. Gender and politics
 *CP, #17, 18
 Debate 11
 *Hunt, "Women in Peacemaking" (2002)
 You decide: Responsibility for peace making in war-torn countries should be turned over exclusively to women
- 4 May B. Democracy in comparative perspective
 *CP, #13, 16, 19, 41
 *A Third World Point of View on the [2000 U.S. Pres.] Election" (2000)
 Debates 12, 13
- 6 May C. Global & comparative politics
 *Wolfe and Klausen, "Other People" (2000)
 *Koehn, "Cross-national Competence and U.S.-Asia Interdependence" (2001)
 You decide 1: Globalism will trump localism/tribalism in the 21st Century
 You decide 2: State sovereignty will survive globalization in the 21st Century
 You decide 3: The United States should legally recognize dual citizenship.

Review

11 May (3:20-4:20) Final Examination

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